

**DEAR PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS,  
CAREGIVERS – EVERYONE INVOLVED IN  
THE LIVES OF YOUNG CHILDREN!**

*A popular Latvian children's poem says that letters and books are the magic doors that allow us entry into many new and different worlds. These magic doors open onto opportunities for everyone to explore, learn about, and enjoy new places, make new friends, and encounter new situations and sensations. We are delighted that through this book kit, we will have the chance to join you as you introduce your child to those magic doors, beginning or continuing an enriching life-long journey into the joys of reading and learning.*

*You have received a set of books developed by the Reading Corner, a project of the International Step by Step Association (ISSA) created by the joint efforts of authors, illustrators, educators, and readers in the countries where ISSA is active. The primary goal of this project is to create high quality children's literature in a multitude of languages by publishing developmentally appropriate, contemporary stories.*

*As you introduce children from two years through the early primary school ages to these books, we would like offer suggestions on how to use the books in much more diverse and meaningful ways for child development than simply reading to children or teaching them how to read. We want to encourage you to look at the books and the time which you spend together in a much broader way.*

*Getting to know books is not only about learning how to read or getting ready for school. Books also support us in discovering the pleasure of exploring, developing learning skills, practicing how to look for information, finding new ideas or expanding and enriching existing ones, and coming upon new perspectives. While we should be very proud of being able to assist our children in developing literacy, learning to read books is only a small step on the continuum of life-long learning. Books can lead us to action. They can give us ideas to create something new, to go somewhere, to talk with other people, and to notice things, events, and people around us. This is why the activities included in this booklet will go far beyond reading and talking about what has been read. Allow your and your children's imaginations to soar. Add to our proposed list of activities, actions and conversations. This kit is just a starting point!*

*Touching and discovering a real book has special meaning today when children in many families, for many different reasons, have less and less opportunities to see adults engaged in reading. Developing a relationship with books and becoming accustomed to reading, rereading, discussing, and enjoying them, builds the habits and develops dispositions which will be very helpful in every period of your child's life.*

*ISSA as an organization believes in quality education and the right of each child to reach his or her full development and potential. Every child can and should be successful, but it requires knowledge and support from us, the adults engaged with children. What can be sweeter than to see a child immersed in the process of exploring a book? You have a special privilege to be beside your child in such moments. We hope that the ideas described in this booklet will help and inspire you. We wish you an enjoyable time with the children and great success!*

*Aija Tuna*

*Dawn Tankersley*